The Spanking Wench
By Yu May and JezebethNoir

Chapter 4:
Who Is That Mysterious Woman? The Shocking Answer Revealed!
By John Wilkes

The young halfling man raised his rather impressive nose high, sending his curly, jet-black hair flying majestically. His clothing was richly tailored, and he wore a peacock feather in his cap. With a flourish, he produced what looked like an antique scroll of parchment from his coat (though it was actually just a cheap, mass-produced prop), and a riding crop with a leather tip cut into the shape of a heart. Clearing his throat, he began to read. “Good folk, I, Lothario the Lover, hereby dedicate this verse to my muse! For I am in love! In love, I say!”

Lothario whipped his scroll around him like a dancer’s ribbon, landing at the side of the bemused spanking wench, who was still holding her flimsy sash in place to cover her breasts, before he landed a stroke across the wench’s backside once with the riding crop. “Now, lend me your ears, for the poetic art of Lothario Lovefoot, the Bard of the Halfling Quarter! Let this be the cypher of my heart. For my muse, though I love her…is an ass!” At the mention of the word “ass,” he spun in place and struck the wench’s ass a second time. The riding crop left a fresh mark in the shape of a little heart where the leather tip landed. The wench hopped in place, the restraints on her legs holding her down, clutching the sash tightly to her bosom as she rasped for air.

“Verily! My muse is a stubborn ass, but what is a stubborn ass but the noble face of courage by another name? And what an ass! Have not the poets taught us that to have courage, is to have *bottom?* And what is a bard if not a man who loves a good *tale?”*

Lothario emphasized the word “tale” with a third stroke. Then gestured his riding crop at his target. “Now, my muse has a name…forsooth, my muse is before me at this very moment!”

The wench bit back her scream, then performatively twisted in her seat to flash him with mocking, bedroom eyes. “You’re cute, honey, but I’m only into taller men.”

Lothario’s eyes popped open. “What? No, not you!”

Most of the congregation, with the notable exceptions of Lady Mother Bridget and Sister Kolhändler, began to guffaw at the sight of the wench stealing his thunder. Lothario’s face burned red. “Now look what you did! You spoiled my punchline. You were supposed to say, ‘Who me?’ and then I’d say, ‘No, not you!’ with my characteristic, cavalier panache! But you went and ruined the gag!”

The wench pressed her lips into a mocking imitation of a kiss. “Oh, I’m sowwy. Would you like to start over from the beginning and try again?”

Lothario stamped his feet. “That never works! Look, it obviously wasn’t supposed to be you, *wench*, because my true love actually *has* a name. And your ass is not worthy to be compared to herself!”

A buxom young halfling woman with curly blond hair and a plain, sensible face, gasped at this news. She had spent the entire service staring wanly at Lothario, and her disappointment was transparent on her face. “Lothario! You never told me you had a main squeeze! Who is she?”

Three more halfling girls, each with hair of a different color, all hopped up and down, screaming. The first was a freckly, ginger-headed lass, with an hourglass figure. The second was a dimple-cheeked brunette, who was diminutive, even by halfling standards. In contrast, the third was relatively tall and slender, also by halfling standards, and stood out from the crowd thanks to her olive skin and raven-black hair. All three roared, all at once, “Me! He means me!”

Then, all three scowled at one another, and immediately pounced into a three-way brawl, screaming obscenities. Their parents, who were all blushing with humiliation, pleaded with their daughters to stop, but were studiously ignored by the three voluptuous combatants.

“You saucy skank! I’m his girlfriend! He’s gonna’ marry me, sooner or later!” screamed the brunette.

“No way, you carbunculous cow! He loves only me! He said so himself!” screeched the red-head. [Proper grammar would have been “carbuncled” rather than “carbunculous,” but she was pretty heated.]

“Sulfurous sluts! Why would he choose little girls like you, when he can have a real woman?” squealed the dark-skinned woman of raven-colored hair.

But the fight was broken up by the buxom blond, who thumped the three younger girls sharply on the head, each in turn, with two fingers. “Enough of that hullabaloo, you girls. Honestly, we’re in church!”

Clutching their aching heads, all three of the jilted lovers roared with rage, and whipped out makeshift weapons (that could all double as spanking implements), before entering into what could only be described as a dramatic battle animation sequence. (They probably watched too many foreign cartoons.) The red-head pulled out an ornate, rose-handled bullwhip, which she flourished dramatically, the petite brunette unsheathed what at first appeared to be an over-large sword strapped to her back, but was in fact a heavy, two-handed spanking paddle, and the black-haired beauty produced a pair of cat-o-nine-tails, which she brandished like nunchucks. Bellowing battle cries, they charged at the older, buxom blond.

Unfortunately, the trio of immature girls hadn’t yet learned to never pick a fight you can’t win. Using practiced mixed-martial arts maneuvers, the blond bombshell brilliantly blocked and deftly

disarmed her three attackers…before thumping them each on the head a second time. “Knock it off, you three, or I’ll give you all spanked bottoms to match the temple wench’s!”

Then the blond sighed and looked to the girls’ befuddled parents. “And as for you folk, do make an effort to control your daughters! Assert your authority!”

“Here, here!” cheered old Sister Kolhändler.

The blond flashed a furious, maternal look at the Lothario. “Lo-lo, I warned you that juggling three girlfriends would bring you nothing but trouble! You know I’m always right about these things. Now, who is this winsome lass, of whom the poets sing?”

All the other halflings glanced knowingly at the blond heroine who had first disrupted (and then restored order to) the ceremony, before looking back at the befuddled bard to await his answer. John Wilkes noticed the mysterious, hooded woman at his side bury her face into the mantle of her cloak to hide her snicker.

Lothario froze. “I cannot say! For the identity of my muse–my angel, my love, my queen–must remain…a secret! Though my romantic, farcical verse may well hint at the nature of my affections!”

“I think it’s me!” sighed the wench, in mock imitation of a swooning, romantic female lead.

Baring her fangs, the buxom young blond woman charged forward to claw at the wench with her nails, before she was thankfully held back by the congregation. “What? Are you trying to seduce poor little Lothario? You bitch! I’ll kill you!”

Lothario started to sweat profusely as he helped restrain the flailing young woman. “No, Willendorf–OUCH!”

Before Lothario could finish, Willendorf (who was of course the buxom blond) accidentally kicked him in the groin, her fingernails scraping wildly against the young man’s perfect face as she fought against the throng holding her back.

The outrage sparked the tempers of the trio of Lothario’s potential-girlfriends, who broke loose from their parents’ grasp, wielding their spanking implements, unable to choose between Willendorf, the temple wench, or one another for their first target.

The following scene was pandemonium. Every time Lothario, or Mr. Sandiman, or Lady Bridget, or one of the parents attempted to seize one of the girls, another broke free. The wench turned back and forth, looking over either shoulder, her fangs bared as she prepared to defend herself. The spanking horse bench rocked dangerously back and forth as the wench lunged to scratch at each of the three young women, before they could scratch her. The red head ducked and slashed her nails across the wench’s exposed buttock. The wench howled, and stabbed at the

red-head so furiously, the hot-headed halfling stumbled backwards, crashing into the other assailants, before they all turned on each other, before they all spotted Willendorf as she struggled to shove past them. Willendorf, now forced to defend herself from her three attackers, halted her own attack on the wench to assist with crowd control, disarming the three violent young women, and barking instructions to their parents on how to properly hold them in place. Even without their weapons, the three young women were still able to scratch, bite, and kick. But the fact they were all distracted fighting with one another, while Willendorf was the only competent martial artist of the four, brought the grudge match to a speedy conclusion.

Once the threat was contained, Willendorf rolled up her sleeves, and waved her finger at the young women's parents. "For shame! If you want my advice, those daughters of yours need a good, bare-bottom spanking, just like the wench gets!"

The three young women rolled their eyes, dramatically.

The red-head smirked, as her mother and father held her clenched fists on either side. "Don't be absurd, sweet-cheeks. We're no elven wenches. We're proper halfling ladies…or I am, at least!"

The brunette scowled, waving her hand so forcefully, she shook her hapless father, who was straining to hold her back. "Yeah, everyone knows spanking is uncivilized. It's fine for elves, and maybe low-class types, but I'm sophisticated. A handsome, artistic bad-boy like Lothario deserves a high-class woman!"

The black haired woman sneered, ignoring her mother who was silently pleading with her daughter to hold her tongue. "Well, that leaves you two out of the running. A poet of Lothario's genius requires something more exotic, more…erotic. Man, I wouldn't mind winding up across his knee. But the idea of spanking a halfling is completely absurd. We're the children of the Lady, after all. Isn't that right, Lady Mother?"

Bridget swallowed, not prepared to deliver a sermon on such a culturally sensitive topic at such short notice. "Well, it's true that the Lady only makes use of spanking wenches because she finds poetic, ironic justice in watching elf maidens brought so low…though theologians do argue whether certain halflings could benefit from the same treatment, in extreme circumstances. On the other hand, the scriptures clearly teach that a halfling must never be whipped nor degraded in the manner that a temple wench is treated… "

Bridget craned her neck, trying to get the attention of the three young women's parents. "But what is also clear from the scriptures and from the traditions of the Lady's apostles, is that the Lady certainly does not *forbid* gentle corporal punishment, applied by loving parents in domestic settings, to correct bad behavior."

All three of the young women froze, and instinctively clutched their bottoms. They had never considered the possibility of a *halfling* lady being spanked like a lowly elven maid, and certainly not themselves!

The feisty red-head was first to object. “Absurd! I don’t care what the scriptures say. My booty, my choice!”

The brunette pouted. “Yeah, I’m far too big for a spanking.” (It did not occur to her that she was one of the least big persons in the room, second only to young Kornblume.)

The tall, dark, black-haired halfling woman held up her nose, and gestured to the temple wench. “If you want to spank someone, spank the wench! She started it!”

“Yeah, get the wench!” roared the red-head, breaking free of her parents’ clutches and snatching up her bull whip.

“Crucify her! Boil her in oil!” bellowed the brunette, recovering her two-handed paddle sword.

“Skin her alive!” hollered the raven-hair, yanking her her cat-o-nine-tail nunchucks out of her poor, devoted mother’s hands.

All three put aside their quarrel with one another long enough to renew their attack on the wench, but before they could enact their plan to flog her to death, the wench silenced them all with a menacing stare.

The drow are an ancient people, with skills in dark magic that precede recorded history. Despite the spanking wench’s absurd position, the primal, predatory nature of her evil eye was unmistakable. Every halfling child had heard bedtime stories about a dark elf coming to get naughty children who disobeyed their parents. “You know, maybe you should ask your parents to spank some sense into you. I don’t think you’d survive it if *I* had to teach you a lesson…in self-defense of course.”

The effect was instant. All three of the young women dropped their weapons, and turned around to rush to their parents, trembling.

Bridget stamped to the altar, and planted three solid smacks on the wench backside, forcing her to shut her eyes, and break the magic of her death stare. “None of that drowish sorcery, wench! It’s my responsibility to guide the lost sheep back to the flock, not yours. Hold your tongue.”

The wench winced, clenching her teeth. “...But they were threatening me!”

“Which is the only reason I’m not putting you under church discipline…for now. Consider yourself lucky.”

But the wench’s evil eye had already had its intended effect. The red-head was already weeping softly. “I’m sorry Mom! I’m sorry Dad! I should have listened to you!”

The brunette buried her face in her father's chest. "Don't let the scary dark elf get me, Daddy!"

The raven-hair held up her hands imploringly. "Forgive me, Mother! I'll be good!"

Her mother sniffed, before deftly lifting up the skirt of her daughter's slinky dress, and pinning it in place with a hairpin. "Yes, you will, because I'm going to spank you! I see now that you're long overdue for one!"

The brunette's father nodded curtly, before doing likewise, using his diminutive daughter's elastic belt to hold up the skirt of her dress. "I agree! I never should have trusted that pop psychology, gentle parenting nonsense!"

The red-head, who had vaguely suspected she might get a spanking before, stiffened as her mother lifted her skirt, and her father hooked it in place with one of the paper clips he always kept handy. "No, Dad! Not a spanking! You've never hit me once!"

"Well, I'm not going to hit you, but I am certainly going to spank you, until your bottom matches your hair!"

The red-head was wearing cheeky briefs decorated with hot-rod flames, emblazoned with the words, "Too Hot to Handle!"

The short brunette wore a cute pair of hipsters decorated with patterned illustrations of a stack of pancakes, bearing the slogan, "Short Stacks for Life!"

The raven-hair had the most scandalous choice of undergarments: a lacy, black thong, stamped with a small image of a d20 die, and bearing the legend: "Roll a Persuasion Check."

"But…but…but!" stammered all three girls, before their parents removed their undergarments simultaneously, revealing all three of their bare butt, butt, butts!

"Not on the bare, Daddy!" pleaded the brunette, as she failed to cover her plump posterior. As she clenched her butt cheeks, they seemed to smirk, revealing two cheerful dimples that matched the ones on her regular cheeks. She had a mole on the right flank of her pearish hips, in the shape of a heart: her very own, no-longer-private beauty mark!

"This isn't like my romantic fantasy novellas at all!" wailed the raven-hair, whose round rump was naturally dark-skinned, but also revealed a distinct tan line from her recent time sunbathing in an exclusive desert resort, along with a tribal tattoo tramp stamp.

"Mom! Dad! Please, oh please, not here!" blubbered the red head, clutching at her briefs, before they were tugged from her grasp, revealing a pale, freckled, heart-shaped bottom to match her face. By now, she had resigned herself to the fact that she was going to get spanked, and her only hope was to throw herself at the mercy of the court.

“You had no shame misbehaving in public. Perhaps you should get your spanking in public, just like the wench! What do you advise, Lady Mother Füdlewhopper?”

Fortunately for the three foolish young ladies, and not so fortunately for the loyal viewers of John Wilkes’ blog, Priestess Bridget intervened. “I agree that a spanking would not be out of order for these three miscreants, but I must insist it be conducted in private. Remember, they are the Lady’s favored halfling children, even when they sin, and fall short of her wisdom. It’s not like they’re a common temple wench, worthy only of derision.”

The women’s parents agreed and escorted their bare-bottomed daughters outside, chatting about how they ought to get together to compare notes on disciplinary techniques. Now censured, all three went meekly along with their perp walk. In the time it took the families to reach the door, the single mother and the single father had already started to hit it off, commiserating on the difficulty of raising a spirited daughter alone, and the red-headed husband and wife had eagerly invited everyone to their private, family getaway cabin in the woods, where they could all put their naughty girls through a week-long “spanking boot camp” together.

The three spoiled young women sniffled, whimpered, and gripped their behinds, already anticipating their new lives in a world where even proper halfling ladies could still get spanked, when they needed it. There’s nothing like the prospect of a first, well-deserved spanking to make you reflect on just how much you deserve to be spanked, and just how often you’ve deserved it in the past.

The garage door of the temple slammed shut behind them, and that’s an end to their part in this tale. Maybe we’ll see more of their fate in a sequel. Who knows?

With that, divine order seemed to have been restored to the halfling temple.

“Young people these days. No sense of propriety!” grumbled Sister Kolhändler.

Willendorf sighed with relief. “Well, I can’t say they didn’t have it coming, after that little outburst. Now, Lo-lo, where were…we?”

At the sight of the wench, Willendorf remembered her former fury. “That’s right! That succubus of a spanking wench is trying to seduce my Lothario!”

Sprinting forward from the congregation, Willendorf easily knocked aside a stunned Lothario. Then she landed a furious flurry of slaps to the wench’s backside, swinging both her right and left arms like a boxer landing a series of wild haymakers. “Don’t! You! Dare! Corrupt! My! Best! Friend! Lothario!”

Wheezing, Lothario crawled forward to grasp Willendorf’s ankles. “No, Willy! It’s not the wench! It’s someone else! I swear!”

At the sight of the supplicant Lothario, Willendorf paused her assault, looking mollified. “...Oh! What a relief!”

Oblivious to Lothario’s pain, Willendorf squeezed his cheeks between her palms, then glanced around the temple with a minxish smile, especially at the other halfling women. “Come on, Lo-lo, you can trust me. After all, we’ve been bestest friends forever since we were in daycare! Just whisper her name in my ear, I won’t tell a soul!”

Lothario’s face went pale as he tried to speak, his cheeks being pressed firmly in Willendorf’s vice-like grip. “But, Wiwwy-doo? Didn’t you hear my opening soliloquy? My verse contains clues to the identity of my one, true love!”

“Ooooo!” cooed Willendorf, releasing Lothario’s face and clapping her hands. “So I’ve got to guess the riddle fist? This is so exciting!”

Willendorf hopped in place, before skipping back to her place in the congregation. “No one interrupt! I’ve got to hear every second of this!”

The wench whistled softly. “I think *I* know who it is!” she said in a teasing, sing-song voice.

“No! Don’t spoil it!” howled Lothario, rushing to the wench, waving his riding crop frantically.

“Spoil it! I want the spoilers! *Who* is she?” cheered Willendorf.

The wench seemed to be rolling the delicious secret over her tongue like a piece of candy, before Lady Mother Bridget scampered to the altar with surprising swiftness and landed her staff sharply across the wench’s backside. With a roar, the wench hopped in place with such force, the horse bench lifted off the ground, before she smacked back down in place atop it. The thin sash fluttered to the floor, leaving the wench with nothing to protect her floppy breasts from grazing against the splintered wood.

“Oh dear!” squeaked Kornblume’s mother, before covering her daughter’s eyes.

“Aw, but Mom! Lemme’ see!” fussed Kornblume.

Kornblume’s father waved a finger reproachfully, though his daughter couldn’t see it. “No Kornblume, this isn’t for children’s eyes.”

Kornblume sighed. “Yes, Papa.”

Lady Bridget waited until the wench ceased whining before lecturing her. “That’s quite enough, wench. If you interrupt Brother Lothario once more, I’ll have to provide you with some…gentle correction.”

Trembling, the wench kept her voice measured as she slowly lifted herself back up. “Yes, Lady Mother.”

Bridget flashed Lothario with a furious glance, as if she was tempted to take him over her knee at that very moment. “Brother Lothario, when dealing with a wench, you must assert yourself. Do not let her dominate you.”

Lothario nodded, then pulled his peacock feather quill pen from his hat to write a note on his scroll. “Be…assertive. Got it! Lady Mother, what if I try repositioning the wench? Will that make the goddess more inclined to listen?”

Bridget sighed, then smiled. “The Lady is not a vending machine. She cannot be easily tricked into giving us what we desire. To please her, you must offer up your very best efforts. Use your wits! Nevertheless, it might be a good idea to reposition the wench. What do you have in mind? …No, don’t whisper it to me. Take charge of the wench. Command her!”

Lothario hastily put away his scroll and feather quill, before tripping to the other side of the horse-shaped bench to stand face-to-face with the wench. “Wench! Stand up!”

The wench obeyed. But with her ankles still strapped to the feet of the bench, she was forced to twist her legs to the side as she stood, bowlegged, and rested her weight on the wooden horse’s carved rump. Some of the congregation chuckled at the sight of the horse’s tail poking out from below the wench, creating the optical illusion that she had a horse tail attached to her own ass.

Lothario looked nonplussed. “Oh, someone will have to undo the restraints. I can–”

Bridget snapped. “Don’t help her. Just give her the marching orders. If the wench’s restraints need adjusting, Mr. Sandiman is right here to handle that for you.”

After all the excitement, Sandiman, who was not a lover of poetic verse, had shuffled to one of the corners of the temple to rest against the wall. He was near dozing off when he heard his name being called, and shuffled forward with a start.

Sticking out his tongue, Lothario hastily made another note on his scroll, looking more confident. “Very well! Wench, I order you to move your own bench in place. Spin it around so that the horse stands perpendicular to the altar…And Sandiman, don’t help her. The wench can manage.”

The wench’s eyes went wide. She looked imploringly to Lady Mother Bridget, her lips forming the word, “But!” But her complaints died in her throat as she eyed the priestess’ staff. With her legs still restrained, the wench was forced to scootch the bench inch by inch, pressing her legs into the splintering wood for leverage. The full weight of her buttocks sank onto the horse’s tail beneath her, and when a new sliver dug into her lower cheeks, the wench whinnied like a pony

and tottered in place. All this created the illusion the wooden horse was prancing in a playful circle, while the wench looked like a rather inept horse rider, close to being bucked off.

The audience's titters of laughter rose to roars at this sight, until the wench finally scootched the bench to the correct angle, and struggled to catch her breath.

In his element, Lothario enjoyed the laughter. “...Now you may remove her restraints, Mr. Sandiman.”

The wench’s head snapped up, scowling as she realized Lothario’s orders had deliberately made her job as difficult as possible. But when she heard the laughter greet Lothario’s punchline, she remembered what it meant to be a temple wench. The injustice, the final insult added to her injury, all meant to add to her deliberate degradation. She felt the tears returning, and with a sharp breath, willed her eyes to remain dry.

When Sandiman had finished releasing her restraints, the wench couldn’t resist the urge to rub her throbbing ankles, not caring how absurd she must look bending forward so far to reach them.

Lothario barked his next order. “Now, approach the horse, as if to mount it, side saddle, like a proper lady. But seeing as you are not a proper lady, just bend over it instead. Bottoms up, and facing the audience.”

The wench grimaced, but obeyed. Things were finally getting back to normal, and as long as she was facing away from the congregation, it would be easier to hide any sign of a stray tear. By lying across the horse, the wench was forced into a sharp jack-knife pose, her bottom thrust uppermost. As expected, Lothario ordered Sandiman to secure the wench’s wrists and ankles again, but at the new angle, this meant the wench’s legs and arms had to be spread out wider to lock her in place, until the once-loose nylon ropes that bound her hands and feet went taught.

Refusing to give her tormentors any further satisfaction, the wench pressed her lips shut as Sandiman tugged at her legs to try and force them to the restraints, until the nylon rope dug into the meat of her legs.

Lady Mother Bridet’s voice interrupted, surprisingly gentle. “Hold on, Mr. Sandiman. Loosen her bonds so that they don’t cut off her circulation. Remember, we are commanded by the Lady to treat our wenches with utmost kindness!”

Sandiman adjusted the wench’s nylon ropes, giving them a few extra inches of give. It was just enough. The wench was now fastly secured in place, just like Sister Kolhändler preferred, but Lothario had discovered an even more humiliating pose.

“*Well, at least I have my loincloth,*” thought the wench.

With a click, Lothario unfastened the wench's loincloth, and yanked it away, like a magician performing the tablecloth trick.

The congregation exploded with laughter.

"What? What's so funny?" growled a grumpy-looking Kornblume, her eyes still covered.

Lothario produced his riding crop from his sleeve. "Now, wench, as I was saying before my love sonnet was so rudely interrupted, my love has a name, and a great ass! And though you certainly have a *large* ass, it positively *pales* in comparison to my muse's *perfectly* pale posterior!"

"I always knew he was an ass man!" roared Willendorf, slapping her knees with mirth, before playfully smacking her own rump. "Go on, Lo-lo! Give her a scorcher, for me!"

Lothario obeyed, and thanks to the wench's new position, he was able to land the stroke on a sensitive spot on the inside of her crack, leaving a heart-shaped mark on the previously unmarked territory. "Fortunately, wench, you do have an ass, and, however stout your ass may be, it shall suffice to suffer my stout blows!"

The wench howled as she felt the next lash of the riding crop mark her inner cheek, an inch below her anus. Slowly, but surely, Lothario was ensuring every square inch of unspanked territory was receiving proper attention. "Love, the ancient poets tell us, is all we need. Hogwash! What is love without sex?"

"Oh, my goodness!" howled Kornblume's mother, forgetting to keep her daughter's eyes covered as she rushed to muffle her ears.

Kornblume blinked and adjusted her thick glasses, eager to see what she was missing. "Huh? What is…sex?"

Kornblume's father quickly rushed to cover his daughter's eyes, and Kornblume only pouted. "Ah, man! How am I ever supposed to learn about my religion?"

Lothario projected his voice to be heard above Kornblume's family squabble. "Yes, sex! For eros, that amorous archer, hath let his arrows fly, belike a pricking dart! And I was but a boy, when first love stung my heart!"

On the word "heart" he applied his crop to the wench's inner thigh for emphasis. "I gazed upon the white, full moon of my fair muse's face, long 'ere I saw the new moon of this dark elf's…ace."

He ended the couplet a bit lamely, struggling to find a rhyme for the word "face," but a stroke of the riding crop to the wench's ass made his artistic intention clear.

Willendorf hummed dramatically, unconcerned that she was interrupting. “Hmm, so that means he’s known this gal for a very long time. I *must* know her!”

“Now, sex, I fear, is not our wench’s due. Chaste she remains, though she’s a shrew.” Titillatingly, Lothario aimed a smarting stroke of the riding crop between the wench’s legs, perfectly on the lips of her exposed vagina. The wench moaned in response, drooling.

“But my muse, like little bird, flits from man to man. A shameless coquette, whose hide I’d like to tan!” Of course, Lothario emphasized the word “tan” with another stroke of the riding crop.

Willendorf accidentally snorted like a piglet, before whispering to her neighbors loud enough to be heard by everyone present. “Oh my, he fancies a dirty girl! Well, that would suit Lothario. Such a skirt-chaser, and a complete pervert…He’s nearly as shameless as I am! That’s why we’re friends I think. We have so much in common!”

Lothario unleashed a volley of blows to cover the last of the wench’s flabby, exposed thighs with fresh marks, until they flushed as red as her buttocks. “Nay, wench, I have no use for thy quivering thighs, nor the domain that there adjacent lies! For far too long, you’ve sat round, like a lump. In short, thou wench, thou art too plump! When you turn round, the full moon is eclipsed. You’d block the golden sun behind your hefty hips.”

Willendorf scratched her golden blond hair as she puzzled over the riddle. “Let’s see, the muse was supposed to be the full moon for the first part of the poem, but now it sounds like she’s the sun, in contrast to the wench, who is the new moon. Sounds to me like we’re looking for a lady with a pale face…”

“Probably a blond?” suggested Lady Mother Bridget.

Willendorf clapped her hands, her sunny yellow hair flopping up and down as she bounced in place. “Of course! He’s fallen for a goldilocks!”

Lady Mother Bridget sighed. “Well, Brother Lothario, is that the last of your…poetry?”

Lothario nodded, his face a picture of self-assurance. “Indeed. So concludes my masterpiece! Is the Lady of Love, the Lady of Laughter, the Lady of Lashes not pleased? Surely now she will grant my wish!”

Bridget fidgeted her fingers. “Well, that’s the thing. The Lady isn’t a genie. She doesn’t just automatically grant our wishes. It’s more like she…opens a door for you.”

Lothario fixed his cap, twirling the peacock feather between his fingers. “Yes, yes, a fine theological point of distinction! But, as for my performance, surely she was impressed?”

Bridget interlaced her fingers. “Ah, the rhyming couplets. Well, I admit I’m not in a position to judge classical poetry, but I’d say your performance was creative, and memorable. You got some great laughs, and you recovered well from the opening dud…”

“So, the Lady is pleased? She will hear my appeal?”

Bridget pressed her index fingers against her lips. “How to put this delicately?…Not quite.”

Lothario’s mouth hung open. “But it was perfect in every detail! It was high art!”

Bridget held up a hand, as if offering a benediction. “My child, sometimes the answer to a prayer is neither, ‘Yes,’ nor ‘No.’ Sometimes the answer is, ‘Not yet.’ Tell me, this…muse of yours. Have you ever tried telling her how you feel?”

“Well, no, that’s why I wrote the poetry. I channel my intense, manly feelings of unrequited love directly into my art.”

“Yes, I’m sure you do. But, hypothetically speaking, if the Goddess *were* willing to grant you a boon, would you ask her to help your unrequited feelings become…un-unrequited?”

“Nothing so crass as that! I know true love can not be forced. I only wanted some help asking a girl out on a date. What if she says ‘No’? I need all the luck and/or divine intervention I can get!”

“That’s perfectly reasonable. Unfortunately, I cannot tell you why the Lady has not deemed you ready to ask her for a boon. But I do know that sometimes, we have questions that can only be answered by exploring it for ourselves. Perhaps you are nearer to the answer than you think.”

Lothario bowed his head, before he slouched back to join the congregation. “Such is the fate of a visionary! It is our lot to suffer in this life, struggling on in the thin hope that our genius may one day be appreciated! Yet I will not blame the Goddess. Clearly, she enjoys a good tragedy!”

The moment he returned to his place, Willendorf clapped him across the back. “Buck up, Lo-lo. I’m sure if you just ask this muse of yours out, she’ll be all over you. She’d have to be blind and stupid not to see a guy like you is a real catch!”

Lothario sighed. “Thank you, Wiwwy-doo. You always know just what to say.”

“...That’s it? All that, for nothing?” hissed the wench.

Lady Bridget scowled. “None of your whinging, wench. You’re here to offer up your bottom to the Goddess, not your irreverent questions.”

The congregation giggled at the sight of the wench trying to argue from her absurd position. The noise of the crowd muffled the sounds of the wench snarling.

“My…name…is…not…‘Wench’!”

Bridget strained her ears to catch the wench’s last words. “Eh? Of course it’s not your name, wench. You have no–”

The wench’s breathing turned heavy as she strained at the leather thongs restraining her.

With a pop, the rusty nails that held the leather straps pulled free of the weathered wood of the spanking bench, first her wrists, then her ankles, and the wench stood to her full height, smacking the top of her skull against the low ceiling. The audience laughed harder at this, assuming this was some sort of prearranged comedy skit planned by Lady Mother Bridget. But the Priestess was mortified.

With a roar, the wench ripped the tattered remains of the leather restraints off her wrists and bellowed. “Stop laughing! Silence! All of you, just shut up!”

“Oh, shut up yourself, you old hag!” barked the cloaked woman, throwing back her hood. John Wilkes blinked. The young woman standing next to him was a dark elf. Apart from her height, she was practically a shorter, mirror image of the nameless temple wench. But as Wilkes looked more carefully, he saw the young woman had bright white hair in a pixie cut, unlike the wench’s absurd, silvery pigtails.

The wench’s anger disappeared, replaced by pure shock. “N-Nelnēae?”

Lady Mother Bridget recovered her wits just in time. With a flick of her finger, she activated the magic nylon ropes tied to the wench’s wrists and ankles. They began to vibrate and steam before the ropes magically tightened like shackles, snapping the wench’s wrists and ankles together. As her legs were bound, the wench had to hop forward awkwardly to catch her balance, barely avoiding face planting on the cobblestone altar floor.

The wench snarled once in protest, trying to stumble back up to her feet, before the cords of the nylon rope spun through the air, hogtying her hands and feet together below her. She tripped, and this time her face smacked against the floor, her rump pointing high in the air behind her, before the magic of the rope seemed to spin her around onto her back, and lift her hands and feet up into the air above her. The crowd roared with delight.

Bridget wiped a bead of sweat from her brow. The halfling congregation hadn’t noticed, but the wench had just deliberately defied an order. Acting like nothing was out of the ordinary, Bridget gestured to the short, dark elf woman. “Good folk, I *had* planned this to be a surprise for you, but today we have *two* esteemed guests visiting our humble temple. May I present: Nelnēae Megwandir.”

Nelnēae blushed, her blue black face flushing purple, as she fumbled to pull her hood back up.

Bridget chuckled jovially, but she also tapped her staff sharply against the floor. “Oh, no point skulking in the corner, young lady. If there’s one thing a halfling can’t stand for, it’s letting a welcomed guest go on feeling unwelcome.”

Nelnēae bowed briskly at the waist, as if by force of habit. “Thank you, Lady Mother. You are too kind. Good folk, your priestess was so good as to invite me to witness your ceremony. I am a humble representative of the Drow Investment Syndicate. Please pay me no mind.”

“Oh, come now, you can’t leave out the best part.”

Nelnēae clutched her arm. “But…don’t your people discourage dark elves from using their names? Or discussing their past lives?”

It occurred to Wilkes that she must be young, at least by dark elven standards. He had heard rumors that a dark elf’s adolescence could last a hundred years, but if Nelnēae was not a teenager, she certainly carried herself like one.

“No! Don’t say anything!” growled the wench. Unfortunately, the nylon ropes were now holding her in what was basically a diaper position, her fleshy sit spots fully exposed. This meant there was no protection for the wench’s upturned buttocks as Bridget snapped her staff across her target, with a practiced flick of her wrist.

As the wench groaned, Bridget turned her attention back to Nelnēae. “You’ve already told us your name, dear. And that rule is for our elven *slaves*, those who chose to take the oath of their own free will. You are not under any such obligations. If you don’t say more, I’m afraid my flock will begin to gossip, and we can’t have that! Tell us your story.”

“No, no, nooo!” mewed the wench, but her voice cracked. The once tall, proud dark elf was twisting in place on the floor, looking up at the younger dark elf with imploring eyes, like a whipped puppy.

Nelnēae’s foot twitched, as if she wanted to run and hide, before she straightened herself to her full height, just an inch shy of the low-hanging rafters. “Very well. In that case…the dark elf you call your temple wench…is my mother!”

The halfling congregation ooh’d and ah’d appreciatively. Willendorf craned her neck to whisper into Lothario’s ear, loud enough to be overheard by all. “This is just like the reality TV show!”

The wench ceased whimpering long enough to bark. “No! You can’t do this to me! I’m a–”

Bridget swung her staff, with just a bit more force, across both the wench’s already scorched, red butt cheeks. The wench made a noise that sounded like a mix between a sneeze, a battle cry, and a baby’s wail. “Schnff–Grrrooaaahrr–haaaa–wa-haaaah!”

Satisfied that the rebellious wench was now properly censured, Lady Mother Bridget raised her hands to silence the murmuring crowd. “Yes, it is true! Young Miss Nelnēae reached out to me with a perfectly charming letter, asking about our temple wench’s situation. And although we *gently* discourage our spanking wenches from speaking about, or even thinking about, their previous lives, before making their oaths of service to the Lady…given the circumstances, I asked for a special dispensation from the High Priestess herself! Nelnēae, would you care to spank the wench?”

The wench fought to catch her breath. “N-Nuh-Neelllnēae! Don’t you dare! D-don’t d-do this to meeeee!”

This time, Bridget was so focused on Nelnēae, she forgot to silence the wench with an additional stroke.

Nelnēae narrowed her eyes. “...I’d be honored.”

The wench made a sucking sound, realized her nose was clogged, and laid her head back on the cobblestone floor, unable to speak. She managed to wipe her eyes with the nylon cords binding her hands and feet, though this only forced her to thrust her upside-down buttocks up even higher. Dimly, she could make out the sounds of her daughter questioning the halfling Priestess. “Is it alright if I don’t know your customs? I don’t want to offend your people. You can correct me if I don’t do it properly.”

Bridget beamed. “Halfling traditions are like signs along an old road. They’re there because the goddess wants to protect us from the dangers of the forest. But they’re not walls. Oftentimes, we must delve into the forest, and chart new paths. And after all, you are not a halfling, under the Lady’s dominion. But you are our honored guest, and you may deal with the wench however you deem fit. All I ask is that you remember this slave is our precious property. Please avoid damaging it beyond repair.”

A thin beam of light from the overhead lamp flickered across Nelnēae’s face. She could have been smiling, oh so slightly. Or it could have been nothing more than a trick of the light, casting a thin shadow at the corner of her black lips. “Wench, stand up, and face me. Mr. Sandiman, remove her bonds.”

Sandiman cocked an eyebrow at this instruction. Normally, the wench was never permitted out of her bonds during a ceremony, a tradition dating back to the early days of the red-bottomed missy herself. But Bridget nodded her head, and soon the wench was able crawl back up onto her feet, now free of the magic restraints.

As the low ceiling forced the wench to hunch over, she now stood eye to eye with her diminutive daughter. The wench tried to maintain eye contact with Nelnēae, her face furious. The staring contest lasted a full ten seconds, before the wench finally blinked, and lowered her eyes.

Nelnēae didn't look away from the wench as she snapped an order at the handyman. "Sandiman, fetch the clothing this wench stole from you. The ones she was hiding away for herself. Lady Mother Bridget, your staff, please."

The Priestess hesitated only for a moment, before deciding that refusing to hand over her staff would look hypocritical after her stirring speech on challenging halfling traditions. After a minute of banging around inside the dark passageway, Sandiman emerged with the contraband motorcycle outfit. "Here it is, Miss. But I think they're a hair too big for you?"

Wordlessly, Nelnēae accepted the clothes from Sandiman, then offered them up to the wench, almost reverently. "Put these on, *thief*. Let's see how you look when you're playing dress up."

The moment the wench reached for the stolen clothes, Nelnēae casually dropped them. Breathing hard, the wench stooped to pick them up, her eyes full of menace.

But in her heart, the wench was terrified. Because she remembered she had once done the exact same thing to Nelnēae, while punishing her years ago.

"No, don't give her the satisfaction of seeing me grovel!" the wench thought.

The wench winced as she pulled the tight leather pants over her aching buttocks, but avoided making any sound of discomfort. She straightened up as high as she could, folding her arms and looking dramatically at Nelnēae, with an air of impatience. But with one look at Nelnēae, the wench knew her daughter could see right through her false courage. And they both knew it. "Turn around and grab your ankles, wench."

The wench complied, moving slowly, gracefully into position. In his corner, John Wilkes could hear the supple leather creak and stretch taut across the wench's plump bottom, as she bent over.

This time, Nelnēae smiled openly. Then she turned to face John Wilkes. He stiffened at the sight of her cold, distinctly dark elven smile. "Tell me, Mister Wilkes, which do you think would hurt more? To be caned while wearing a protective layer of tough leather, or to be caned while naked?"

"Well, to be caned while naked, of course. No protection and all that."

Nelnēae swung a blinding stroke with the staff across the wench's buttocks, wielding it more like a sword than a cane. The wench stiffened, but stayed resolutely in position. "So you might assume. But consider this: clothing may protect one from heat or cold, but it also constrains the flesh. And right now, the spanking wench's fat, fleshy ass is stuffed good and tight into those absurd leather pants. See how they're practically bursting at the seams?"

After landing a second blow with the staff, Nelnēae rested it on the ground, playfully balancing it against her index finger. “What would you say, wench? Would you prefer to continue this caning over your stolen pants, or over your bare bottom?”

This time, the wench pressed her face against her knees, gritting her teeth, before answering. “Can’t say I feel much of a difference. Perhaps you imagined the idea, the last time you were caned.”

A third blow of the cane elicited a roar of protest from the wench. She rocked back and forth on the balls of her feet, but remained in position. Nelnēae clicked her tongue. “Don’t be so vague. Speak clearly. You mean the last time you caned me, don’t you, Mother?”

The wench didn’t move. “...Don’t call me ‘Mother.’”

Nelnēae landed a fourth stroke of the cane. “And why not? Do you like the name ‘Wench’ better now? Have you grown fond of it?”

The wench swallowed. Ordinarily, she liked the comforting sound of the name ‘Wench.’ It both reminded her of her humble position, and helped her forget her troubling memories of her former, prideful life. But at the moment, the wench hated the word, “Wench.” “It’s no better nor worse than any other name, I suppose.”

A fifth stroke of the cane. This time, the wench kicked her foot up reflexively at the knee, snarling, before she could register anything that was happening around her.

The wench’s brain felt like it was swimming, but she dimly made out Nelnēae continuing her interrogation. “And, what of your backside? Do you find this caning no better, nor worse, than a caning across your bare bottom?”

As a fifth, brand new welt rose into place, pressing angrily against the inside of the seat of her pants, the wench knew the true answer. This was far worse than a caning over her bare bottom. “What I say doesn’t matter. You’ll just cane me however you please, either way.”

The sixth lash of the cane was the worst so far. John Wilkes felt he finally understood the meaning of the phrase “Six of the best instructors.” The wench howled like a werewolf, her knees trembling. She released her grip on her ankles for an instant, and began to straighten up, before she heard Nelnēae snicker teasingly. “What’s the matter? Can’t stand still without fidgeting?”

At that, the wench clutched her ankles even tighter, snorting for air, to keep from speaking.

Nelnēae tapped her mother’s bottom a few times with the end of the staff. “We will continue this caning until you answer truthfully. Which hurts more? A caning over the bare backside? Or like this?”

“This…hurts…more…” grunted the wench, gulping for breaths between each word.

“Then ask me, politely, to stop caning you.”

The wench twisted her spine to glare furiously at her daughter. “So you can just carry on caning me over the pants anyway, as a little joke? Or were you planning to have me bare my ass, so we can compare notes?”

Nelnēae swung the staff less like a cane, and more like a baseball bat. The force sent the wench barrelling forward, but she managed to catch herself with her hands. Trembling with either fear or rage, or both, the wench slowly lifted herself back into position.

Using the tip of the staff, Nelnēae lifted the puppy fat of the wench’s lower butt cheeks. “When I was young, you would have given me extra strokes for leaving position like that. And I intend to carry on caning you until I get a proper answer. If you don’t want this caning to last forever, then ask me, politely, to end your caning.”

“Just stop it, already. You made your point, brat.”

As expected, Nelnēae swung the staff like a baseball bat again, but this time the wench was able to anticipate the blow, and kept her balance. “Politely, wench.”

“Please…please, stop caning me, Nelly.”

As the ninth stroke impacted the wench’s bottom, a shiver traveled up and down her spine, and through her legs, before she shrieked.

Nelnēae tapped the staff against her mother’s bottom. “Don’t ever call me ‘Nelly.’”

“...please, Nell..Nelnēae…please don’t do this to me.”

Mercilessly, Nelnēae landed a tenth stroke of the cane, but this time she used the traditional flicking motion of her wrist, rather than the home run derby baseball swing. The wench couldn’t hide the sobbing behind her voice as she bucked up, her hands flying to cover her buttocks.

“I will cane you as long as I see fit. Now, back into position. Then ask me, politely, to continue caning you, just the way you taught me to…And stop your sniveling.”

The wench sniffed as she obeyed. “...P-please, continue caning me, mistress.”

Nelnēae tapped her mother’s backside to warn her of the coming stroke, then raised the cane high. The wench hunched her shoulders, bracing herself for another volley of cane strokes. But

as Nelnēae whipped the cane down, she checked her swing at the last possible moment. The wench screamed in terror, only for the cane to bounce lightly off the seat of her leather pants. The halflings, who had been terrified at the spectacle of this strict caning, tittered with laughter at the sight.

Nelnēae flashed a toothy grin. “There, that should suffice for a caning. At ease, wench.”

As she heard the laughter building to a crescendo behind her, the wench collapsed onto her knees, and huddled on the floor.

Nelnēae turned and offered the priestess her staff. “I’m sorry, I’m afraid that wasn’t very funny, by halfling standards. That was more of a traditional dark elf approach to caning. We do have some forms of torture that were considered quite droll among the ancient drow. But I’m not sure if the sense of humor would translate to a modern audience. Should I try something more…halfling?”

The Priestess swallowed as she accepted her staff, not sure if Nelnēae was trying to be funny or not, and equally terrified by both possibilities. “Oh, my! No pressure, my dear. Of course, we might benefit from experiencing another culture’s…sense of humor. But I’ve always found you can’t force funny. Just…do what comes naturally.”

Nelnēae’s hands lingered on the Priestess’ hands, her face lighting up with revelation. “Ah! I see. You know, I never favored caning. It always struck me as needlessly cruel, at least when I was on the receiving end. But, there is one more thing I’ve been dying to try, if it’s not a bother. Do you happen to have a sturdy, high-backed chair? Without armrests?”

Priestess Bridget blinked, but before she could answer, Nelnēae started to chatter absent-mindedly, “Oh, what am I saying? Of course not, that’s a big people thing. But if you have a little wooden stool, I think I could manage. I’d have too–”

Bridget shushed the adolescent dark elf, affectionately. “I know we have some sort of chair. It should be sized for big people. Mr. Sandiman, fetch it, if you please.”

Sandiman pressed his face into his palm, before adjusting his trousers and delving back into the dark storage room to retrieve the chair. As he explored, the muffled sound of furniture being moved aside and boxes of nick-nacks being knocked over echoed from the dark passageway behind the altar.

Nelnēae’s eyes brightened as if she had just been offered a holiday gift, wrapped with a bow. “Really? You don’t mind if I sit down while I deal with her? I know it’s against tradition to be seated in the presence of your Goddess, but I was hoping–”

Once again, Bridget shushed the adolescent dark elf, this time more brusquely, as if she was resisting the temptation to spank some sense into the youthful dark elven maiden. “Yes, yes,

dear. I think I have an inkling of what you have in mind for the wench. It's a tad unorthodox, but the rule against sitting is only a rule for the wench. For a halfling, it's a matter of personal conscience, but for anyone else, it's really no problem!"

At the mention of this, John Wilkes felt his knees and lower back throbbing, and wondered how long the halflings had intended to keep him stooping in the corner before mentioning this minor point on their religious customs.

Lady Mother Bridget was growing more animated, waving her arms to start hyping up the crowd. "Go on! Tell us what's in store for the poor wench. Anticipation builds up to the punchline!"

Nelnēae couldn't hide her youthful enthusiasm, all her affected coolness and stoicism forgotten. "Well, you see, when I was in school, Mother tended to punish me frequently. I always *hated* the canings, but there was always something…*different* about regular over-the-knee spankings. Somehow, I never minded those as much, lying across Mother's lap. And I always dreamed of giving her a spanking just like that, even when I was no taller than…well a halfling!"

Now that the terrifying caning was over, the halflings began to snicker again, both at the sight of the exhausted wench, and at their guest of honor's growing excitement. The line about being no taller than a halfling earned a hearty belly laugh from one congregant, and soon the rest joined in. But as the wench slowly recovered from the ordeal of her caning, she began to process what she could hear. And she didn't like it. At the sight of her daughter, the wench had determined to maintain a strict facade of stoicism, withholding her emotions as much as possible. But the ferocious caning had gradually worn down her resolve. She had cried fresh tears, not just from the pain itself, but at the humiliation of being brought so low, by her own daughter, no less.

The wench remembered the last time she had punished Nelnēae. She remembered how she would always lie, and tell Nelnēae that she would never use force to give her a spanking, and that Nelnēae needed to accept it of her own free will.

Of course, both of them had known that was a lie, since she had forced Nelnēae over her knee countless times, before paddling her thoroughly. But Mother had enjoyed the fiction. She had enjoyed making Nelnēae stand with her hands behind her head, while baring her backside. She had enjoyed sending her daughter to fetch a sturdy wooden hairbrush, or a belt, or to cut her own switch. She had enjoyed making Nelnēae politely ask for her spanking, before beginning. She had enjoyed giving Nelnēae all the extra strokes for squirming or talking back. She had enjoyed extracting all the promises and pleas and apologies from her repentant daughter, long after she was well-chastened.

And most of all, Mother had enjoyed making Nelnēae stand and say, "Thank you for spanking me, Mother," before sending her to sit in timeout, or stand in the corner, with a bare, red bottom deliberately put on display for family and friends.

It was the ritual nature of it all. Anytime the stress and anxiety of life as a CEO had been too much, the matriarch of the Megwandir family had found a perfect outlet for all her frustrations: Nelnēae's helpless little backside.

Before she became a halfling temple wench, the nameless wench had carefully suppressed that thought, afraid to admit it even to herself. But, for the past year, the memories of how she'd treated her daughter had haunted the wench, especially when she was near breaking down in tears. At those times, the wench had felt that this was her due, that it was her turn to play the part of Nelnēae, and for someone else to play the part of the matriarch of the Megwandir family.

Then the wench felt a sharp tug as Nelnēae pinched her by her long, pointy ear and lifted her to her feet. And to her terror, the wench knew her nightmare had become real.

Nelnēae had the maternal gaze down pat, as she shook her head. "All right, young lady, you've stolen from these good people. And now you're going to pay the price. Stand up straight, and put your hands behind your head."

The wench started to obey automatically, then faltered as she ducked short of the rafters. But Nelnēae was having none of it, reaching around to land a quick pop on her mother's posterior. "Don't hunch! Stand tall, like a proper lady."

Feeling her eyes stinging, the wench twisted her head until she found a gap between the narrow wooden rafters, and stood as close as she could get to her full height. As she heard the halflings laughing, she knew she must look like her head was stuck in the ceiling, and wanted to scream.

Nelnēae clapped the wench's aching backside a second time to remind her to keep her hands in place, then slowly undid the belt buckle, and unbuttoned the front of the wench's leather jeans. "Are you proud of yourself? Prancing around in this spiky, foolish costume? Do you like to pretend you're not a slave? Well, no more pretending."

With a clean yank, Nelnēae neatly tugged down the wench's leather pants by the hem, just below her hips. The tight pant legs held them snugly in place, like leggings. "Now turn around, and show everyone what happens to naughty girls who steal."

Her elbows and head banging against the rafters, the wench struggled to obey. The moment the wench tried to lower her hands to maneuver past a cobweb, Nelnēae planted another smack across the wench's aching lower buttocks. "Keep your hands on your head, silly. Can't you remember simple instructions, wench?"

Tears welled in the wench's eyes, and as she choked on dust, she overheard the crowd's murmuring and cheering at the sight of her.

"Just look at the wench! She's in a pickle, ain't she?"

“Her poor bottom. I feel sorry for the wench…”

“No need to. She’s only a spanking wench, after all. Not a person like you and me.”

And as she heard the halflings repeat the word “Wench,” over and over again, something snapped.

Sandiman returned with the high-backed chair, and despite his girth, it took all his strength to haul it. Wilkes noticed that the halflings had clearly guessed badly how big a “big person’s chair” was supposed to be. Nelnēae discovered her bottom covered the entire narrow seat, despite her live, elven build.

Oblivious to her mother’s building rage, Nelnēae adjusted the angle of her smallish chair, decided it was sturdy enough to serve, and patted her lap invitingly. It was as if Nelnēae was playing house and the wench was only her doll. “Now, wench, you’re going to be getting a proper spanking over my knee. Come here!”

The laughter built to a crescendo. The wench trembled as she looked down at her daughter, wanting to beat her to within an inch of her life. “I...am…not…a…wench! I am your mother!”

Tearing at the ribbons that had kept her silvery hair in two, childish pig tails, the wench rounded on the congregation and snarled a war cry. Unfortunately, she forgot to pull her pants back up, which rather spoiled the intimidating effect.

“Do you know who I am? Do you know how many fortunes I have made? Or how many lives I destroyed to make those fortunes? How many centuries I have lived, before any of your grandfathers’ grandfathers were even born? I am a *queen!”*

But the halfling audience only laughed harder. “Who is the wench talking about?” giggled a childish voice, which she recognized Kornblume’s.

“I don’t see anyone grand like that! Only a no-name-havin’ spanking wench!” bellowed Mr. Sandiman.

The wench spat foamy specks of spittle as she screeched to be heard over the din. “You nasty little rabbits! I could have you all skinned, then boiled, slowly, for a stew! I have a name! And my name would send you rats scurrying back to your holes! …My! …Name! …Is–”

But before the wench could shout her true name with pride, the leather pants slipped down to her knees and tripped her up. She landed on something soft, like a cushion, and as she blinked, the wench saw with terror that she had fallen right across her daughter’s lap.

A single swat awoke the wench from her reverie. She wanted to stand up and kill everything in sight, including her own daughter, but after many years of indolent service to the halfling temple,

the wench had grown soft, sedentary. As she strained, the wench realized that she was now too weak to fight her own daughter. There was nothing playful about Nelnēae's voice anymore. She began to spank the wench, aiming slowly and carefully, leaving a few seconds between each smack, so that the wench had time to feel the full effect of each.

"Shame on you."

CLAP!

"You can't even commit to your stupid vows, can you?"

WHACK!

"It's bad enough you made a fool of yourself on that *idiotic* reality show–"

THWAP!

"–bragging about how you were going to be the most famous spanking wench since the Red Mistress. As if that's something to be proud of!"

WHAP! SMACK!

"You made a laughing stock of the entire Megwandir family, and for what?"

THWACK!

The wench bucked, straining her back and kicking her legs uselessly. "Unhand me! Do you hear me, Nelnēae, I'm your–!"

"No! Don't call yourself my mother. You lost that right."

Nelnēae began to steadily increase the pace of the hand spanking, speaking loud enough to be heard clearly over the brisk clapping rhythm. "You know, I'd almost forgiven you. For the beatings, for the constant teasing."

The wench hissed. "Is that what you're mad about? That was nothing! Back in my day, my mother–"

Nelnēae landed a clap to each of the wench's lower sit spots, the fat flesh jiggling wildly with each impact. "Shut. Up."

It took another ten spanks to convince the wench to finally shut up, and Nelnēae continued her lecture as if nothing had interrupted her train of thought. "I understood you meant it to be tough love. To prepare me for a cut-throat business. To prepare me to take over the clan. But then,

after years of molding me, of punishing me for slacking off in school, of pounding the idea that I was going to be the clan matriarch one day, every single day, you just randomly decide to quit? To just leave that life behind and join a church? And not even an honorable, drow cult, but…this? Why? Because you were bored?"

The wench's mind scrambled. It was true, she had lived for centuries, enduring a terrible, lingering sense of banality. But it was more than that. For the first time in her life, the wench became conscious of something she had never been able to vocalize. Her past life hadn't merely been boring. It had been entirely without a sense of purpose.

"I…I couldn't stand that life! You don't understand, I had to get out! I had to–"

Nelnēae punctuated every word of her next sentence with a sound spanking. "This! Is! Not! About! You!"

The wench started to squirm as Nelnēae increased the pace of the punishment yet again. "Of course, you had an existential crisis, so what did you do? You left me holding the bag."

"But, my sisters! My sisters were supposed to help guide you to–"

"Oh, yes, my darling aunties! After they took their cut, they all decided to jump ship. So I had to take on all that responsibility once you left. I had to deal with the old rivalries and enemies you never prepared me for! I had to live the life you hated so much, since you couldn't be assed to lead the clan!"

"I'm sorry! I didn't think! I'm so–"

The wench was interrupted by another round of spanks, each acting as an exclamation point for Nelnēae's diatribe. "Don't! Say! I'm! Sorry! I don't want to hear, 'I'm sorry!' A *Megwandir* never says, 'I'm sorry!' Remember?"

The spanks were coming down at a blinding speed now, and it became impossible for the poor spankee to mentally register each spank. The furious sound of the spanking's pace, and the cumulative effect of the burn, was enough to snap the wench out of her fury. And without anger, she lost her last mental tool to resist the fear. The wench remembered screaming those exact same words, as she had thrashed Nelnēae for not saying she was sorry, before thrashing her again for daring to say, "I'm sorry."

"N-Nelly?"

"Never! Call! Me! Nelly! Ever! Again!"

The wench gasped, and started to say, "I'm sorry," before she corrected herself. "I'm so–No! Don't!"

“No! More! Apologies! No! More! Pleading! No! More! Excuses!”

The wench’s mind raced, with apologies, pleading, and excuses, before she remembered something. She didn’t have to put up with this. She was powerful! She was dangerous! “Stop it! Stop this right now! I’ll destroy you all!”

“You’ll do nothing. You have no more power. That ship has sailed. Want to know what happened to your precious Megwandir Family Conglomerate? I burned it to the ground. Turned over all the dark, dirty secrets to the authorities, sold the remaining assets at auction, and donated the little that was left to what you used to call ‘bleeding-heart’ charities. It’s gone! You’re stuck here. Now, you’re nothing but a slave–a silly, little, red-bottomed spanking wench–forever and ever!”

The wench felt a pang of despair as the meaning of her daughter’s words dawned on her, before a spank brought her to her senses. “No! Ow! I want out! Ouch! I don’t–oh!–I don’t *want* to be a spanking wench anymore! Eeow! L-Lady Mother Füdlewhopper! Yow! I d-d-*demand* to see the High–aiee! I wanna’ see the High Priestess! I demand my freedom!”

This news confused Nelnēae enough to pause the spanking momentarily. She raised an eyebrow as she cocked her head toward the Priestess. “Huh? What is she talking about? She can do that?”

To Nelnēae’s confusion, she had accidentally stumbled across perfect comedic timing. The halflings erupted in fresh laughter. Lady Mother Bridget wiped tears of mirth from her eyes. “Oh heavens! Don’t that beat all! Don’t worry, wench. I’ll get right on that. You should expect to hear back in the next few weeks…or the next few decades, at least!”

Her temper returning, the wench lost all sense of dignity. She flailed her hands and feet, throwing a temper tantrum worthy of a toddler. Her leather pants tangled around her ankles. “N-No! I mean it! I’ll run away! I’ll build an army, and return with vengeance! If you don’t free me, I’ll make you wish you’d never been–”

But Nelnēae had heard enough, and renewed the spanking. “No! More! Threats! …And that’s another thing, how *dare* you threaten these people, after they took you in! I don’t blame them for hitting you! You deserve every ounce of pain and shame you can possibly get! And if I find out you ran away, I’m spanking you like the brat you are and bringing you straight back here to make you apologize, and ask them–*politely*–to take you back, and spank you morning, noon, and night for a decade! And if you ever *do* manage to get kicked out, I’ll make *you* wish you’d never been born! Do you remember saying that to me? You used to scream that at me while you beat my ass, until I really *did* wish I’d never been born. Well, I’ll do you one better! I’m gonna’ make *you* wish you’d never *given* birth to *me!”*

The halfling laughter died down, as it slowly dawned on them that this wasn’t an act. Nelnēae was spanking and screaming with every ounce of force she could muster, oblivious to the

wench's protests. At long last, the wench's will to fight gave out. Two tears poured down either of her cheeks. Finally, the wench managed to blubber, "I'm s-sorry, Nelly! I'm so, so sorry!"

Spitting with rage, Nelnēae roughly pulled the wench's own belt free from its loops. Realizing what was about to happen, the wench made one final, futile effort to kick free, before Nelnēae used the folded belt to land three sound lashes in quick succession. "Don't! Tell me! You're sorry!"

The wench screamed in terror and pain and despair as her daughter unleashed a volley of twenty lashes with the belt as fast as possible. The wench didn't even have time to mentally process the pain. She collapsed across her daughter's lap, bawling, straining to cover her backside with her hands and feet. Roaring, Nelnēae easily subdued her mother's vain struggle, before delivering three, slower, more deliberate blows with the full strength of her arm. These ripped across the wench's backside with such force, they broke skin, and the wench's voice cracked as she screamed in agony. The last three strokes were the worst pain she had ever experienced in her entire life, and the wench could do nothing but lie on her belly, and take it. She couldn't even beg for mercy anymore.

Breathing hard, Nelnēae shook her throbbing right arm, which was trembling from the strain. But as she raised the belt high yet again, a wooden staff blocked her arm. The dark elf girl awoke, as if from a dream, and saw Lady Mother Bridget at her side. "Nelnēae dear, that's quite enough. You promised not to damage our property. But just look at our poor wench's backside."

"Spare me the religious crap! Don't tell me I have to forgive this monster after what she…what she did to–"

Nelnēae froze as she saw the damage she had done. Sure enough, the long ordeal had taken its toll on the wench's buttocks. The birches had left an angry pattern of flame, and welts from the rope, the cane, the riding crop criss-crossed over every square inch, even before Nelnēae had begun. Nelnēae's use of the staff as a make-shift cane had left deep bruises, and although her dainty hand was far lighter than any implement, Nelnēae's hand spanking had long ago left the wench's bottom a mottled blue-purple color. Fresh blisters the size of Nelnēae's palm began to form across the wench's entire buttocks and thighs, pulsing and stretching. The belt had left deep, throbbing cuts that stretched all the way across her mother's buttocks.

Instantly, Nelnēae felt tears of shame spilling down her cheeks. "M-mommy? I'm sorry!"

Mother and daughter both whimpered, "I'm sorry," over one another, until Bridget sighed and tapped her staff. "Land sakes! I'll have to use some minor healing magic on the wench's buttocks. That will prevent any scarring, or blood clots. Really, you must *never* spank in anger, dear."

By this point, Nelnēae was completely inconsolable, her cries matching the suffering wench's in intensity. "I've become my mother! I swore I'd never be like her!"

But as Briget's healing magic took effect, the wench's desperate, broken sobs softened to soft weeping. "There, there. You're not the first person to pass on generational trauma. Though this is probably the first time I've seen it being passed in this direction. Now, try spanking her again, and I'm sure you'll do better this time."

As Nelnēae blinked, two tears spilled down her face and landed on her mother's upturned bottom."Spank her? Again? But she can't possibly take any more…"

Bridget pressed her thumb against her nose, and winked. "Have another look!"

Nelnēae glanced down at her mother's behind. As her tears dripped down and impacted it like raindrops, literal steam rose from the wench's scorched red caboose. Her buttocks could have passed for a tiefling's tuchas, not a drow's derriere. Then, the bruises faded to green, and disappeared, the bloody cane marks scabbed and healed over, and the blisters peeled away, leaving fresh skin underneath.

The wench moaned, as her buttocks were restored to nearly perfect health, though it was still bright red. Unfortunately for her, the healing effect had also erased the numbness that had built up over time. A spanking tends to sting most at the beginning, before the brain gradually learns to diminish the urgent sense of pain to a faraway ache. Now, the wench's bottom was completely sensitive again, as fresh as…well, a baby's bottom.

Bridget enjoyed both the spectacle of her magic at work, as well as the look on Nelnēae's face. "Now, I suppose you drow must have your own queer sense of dark humor, and I suppose there's no harm in that, for drow matters. But the Lady is very clear: our spanking wenches are to be tamed with nothing but kindness. The trick is to remind yourself you love her the whole time you're spanking her. Now, tell the silly wench what she needs to do, and make sure she understands why she's getting a spanking."

Blushing, Nelnēae examined her mother's backside, and tried to remember anything to do with spanking that wasn't marred by her childhood trauma. She remembered, once, her mother had spanked her for stealing candy, years before they had both become so involved in the family business, and said the first thing that popped into her mind. "All right young lady, that was just a warm-up for making a fuss in public. Now, we're going to talk about what you did, and then I'm going to spank you *properly*. Stand up, put your hands on your head, and look me in the eye."

Quivering, the wench slumped off her daughter's lap and back onto her feet, and interlaced her fingers behind her head. Her tears had made her mascara run black smears down her shining cheeks, and her silver hair was in tangles, sticking to her face and nose. She hiccuped, then sniffled.

Nelnēae took a deep breath, and folded her hands before her. "Now, do you know what you did wrong?"

The wench tried to mumble something, perhaps a combination of Sorry's, Please's, No's, and her daughter's name, but Nelnēae shook her head. "No whining allowed. If you don't know the answer, say, 'No, Ma'am.' But if you do know the answer, say, 'Yes, Ma'am.'"

"*Hic*...Yes, ma'am. I stowe the costume…"

"Yes, even though you knew you weren't allowed to have it. And why did you do that?"

"...Buh…*Hiccup!* But I just wanna' to play pretend…"

Nelnēae patted her mother's bottom, just firmly enough to jiggle the puppy fat. "No making excuses. Why did you disobey, and steal the costume?"

The wench scrunched her face. "B-because…I'm a silly girl…ma'hm!" The wench squeaked a mangled version of the word "ma'am" after feeling another love tap to remind her of her manners.

"And what else did you do wrong?"

The wench's lip trembled. "An' I…I made a fuss during my spankin'...m'am…"

"That's right. And what *else* did you do wrong?"

The wench stuttered and stammered, then bowed her head as she recalled her many crimes. "I, I, I said naughty words and an' an'...an' I was mean to you…I was so, so mean…"

As the wench's voice, and mind, began to clear, and she stopped dropping her consonants. "Nell? I'm so sorry! What I did to you was unforgiv–"

Nelnēae held up a finger. "Nope! I don't want to hear no sorry's. Not yet anyway. You're gonna' be sorry, soon enough. Excuse me, Mr. Wilkes. You'll find my satchel behind you. Kindly open the flap on the front and show the wench what I brought for her. It's a little, belated birthday present."

Automatically, Wilkes found the pouch, and discovered a heavy, ebony hairbrush. Carved on the back in silver was a geometric representation of the phases of the moon, with a pale buttocks in place of the full moon. At the sight of the brush, the wench shook her head. "N-no…No, ma'am! Please, not that! You can spank me! Gimme' a spanking, but please, not the hairbrush! Please, please, pl–"

The wench stiffened as she felt Nelnēae hold her in place with one hand, and reach around to plant a swat on her other cheek with her free hand, firmer than before. "Repeat after me: yes, ma'am. I will obey!"

The wench bounced in place on the balls of her feet. “Yes, maaa’hm! I’ll obey!”

Nelnēae released her hold on the wench’s hip and pointed toward the hairbrush. “Then go fetch your hairbrush, carefully, and tell Mr. Wilkes thank you for helping you get it for me.”

Resisting the urge to sprint, the wench shuffled towards Wilkes, her leather pants, once her pride and joy, now hanging inside out and trailing from her ankles behind her. Stunned, Wilkes handed over the hairbrush and accepted the wench’s polite gratitude. Then she carried it back to her daughter, like a convict bearing the tool of her own execution.

By now, the wench’s breath was short and strained, interrupted by jarring hiccups. She offered up the brush in both hands, balancing it on her palms. Without being coached by Nelnēae, the wench seemed to remember what came next, from previous experience. “I-I-I’m reh-reh-ready for my sp-spah-spanking, muh-m-mommy!”

Nelnēae shook her head as she accepted the brush. “Not quite. Take off the clothes you stole, fold them nicely, and give them back to the Priestess. And tell her you’re sorry.”

The wench complied, glancing nervously behind her back, aware of all eyes in the room on her naked form, before kneeling to offer up the stolen clothes. After the wench stumbled through her apology, Bridget patted her lightly on the head and pointed her back toward the inevitable: Nelnēae’s lap. Too shaky to stand, the wench crawled on hands and knees, resting her head on her daughter’s lap, as though she wanted to make every blessed second count before the dreaded spanking began.

“Now, young lady, because you’ve been very naughty, you’re going to be getting *two* extra spankings today. One is for how you spoke to me, which deserves a good spanking all by itself. The second is for letting down all these good folk who’ve been nice enough to take you in. The first spanking will be exactly like how we used to do it at home. Do you remember?”

The wench nodded, meekly. Of course, Nelnēae was referring to how her mother used to spank her when Nelnēae was little, but the wench was so exhausted and sorrowful, as she tried to remember those spankings, all she could think about was how she, the wench, was the one who deserved the punishment all along. In that moment, the wench fully believed that she was the chastised daughter, not the cruel mother, in her own memories.

Nelnēae patted her lap, and that was enough to encourage the wench to climb into place.

This time, Nelnēae adjusted the angle of her seat, deliberately, so that the wench’s face pointed away from the congregation, and guided the naked wench across her right knee. Then Nelnēae switched the hairbrush to her left hand, to allow her right arm time to rest. The wench felt her legs dangling on either side of Nelnēae’s right thigh, before Nelnēae secured her grip around the wench’s waist and patted her bottom to get her attention.

The wench tensed as she felt Nelnēae rubbing the cool wood in circles against her red, hot bottom. “Now, once more, ask Mama to give you your spanking, and be polite.”

Feeling her tears return, the wench sniffed, ashamed to be seen crying. “Puh-pwease, gimme’ a spankin’, Mommy!”

The first blow of the hairbrush popped across the wench’s left butt cheek, sending ripples quivering through it. Thanks to the effects of the healing magic, the wench was now keenly aware of the fresh, smarting sting. For some reason, the wench felt a strong desire to not cry, and show her “mommy” she was a big girl now. And for the first ten strokes, she managed to resist the urge to cry bravely. But the next ten strokes took their toll, and as the burning built to a hot sensation, the wench squirmed to escape, and broke down crying.

The wench felt the next wave of tears fill her eyes, and as she closed them, she let them flow like waterworks. The moment she felt the relief that came with shedding tears, the punishment paused.

Nelnēae pointed firmly towards the wooden horse spanking bench. “That will do for spanking #1. Now, march straight over to your horsey, and stand behind it, so I can give you spanking #2.”

Covering her exposed front in shame, the wench lifted herself shakily, and shuffled towards the dreaded bench, happy to have a moment’s relief from the terrible ebony hairbrush. But the knowledge that she was about to be paddled further, and the memory of the terrible splinters, made her whimper, incoherently, as she approached the front of the bench and lowered herself across it.

Nelnēae patted the wench’s bottom to get her attention. “No silly, not in front of it. I told you to stand behind it, this time…that’s right, facing this way. You broke the straps when you threw your little tantrum, so this time, you’ll just have to be brave and hold yourself in place, if you don’t want extras.”

Nelnēae gently guided the wench across the bench, so that this time, she was face-to-face with the audience. The wench bit her lip as she remembered all the people watching her, and averted her gaze.

Nelnēae brushed the wench’s cheek. “Now, I want you to take a moment to look at all the people watching you, right now. Look into their eyes. These are the faces of the people you stole from. These are the people you promised to serve. But you’ve been disobedient. You broke your promise.”

The wench craned her neck to look into her daughter’s eyes. “M’sorry, m’sorry, please forgive me!”

Nelnēae silenced the wench with three quick love taps across each of her butt cheeks. “Don’t say it to me. Say it to the people you wronged.”

The wench looked up at the crowd of people watching her intently, and met their gaze, feeling their eyes focus on her face, and staring at the top of her upturned bottom behind her. Breathing hard, the wench imagined how stupid she must look, but with an effort, held her head high to apologize. “I’m sorry, people! I’m sowwy I was bad! I’ll do better! I puh-p-p’womise!”

Nelnēae tapped the wench’s bottom playfully, to warn her they were about to begin “And what do you say, to be polite, before your spanking? What’s the magic word?”

The wench let her next tears fall without a struggle, not taking her eyes off the crowd of halflings. “Please spank me, Mama!”

The hairbrush sank deep into the wench’s right butt cheek, and at long last, she was getting the spanking she needed. The spanking she always wanted. The room erupted with howls of laughter, as the wench broke down into fresh apologies and begging. For a moment, the wench became lucid, and felt the absurdity of it all. She threw a hand back, only to hear Nelnēae bark at her to hold still, and that she had just earned extras.

Fighting for air as snot dribbled down from her nose, the wench nodded her head and lowered herself back into position, her attempts at apologies lost behind her quivering voice. The next round of spanks landed with enough force, they overwhelmed the previous ache, and broke the wench down all over again.

In the end, she gave up on hoping for mercy, and decided to settle for justice. She screamed the words “Forgive me!” over and over, and ended by whimpering “Spank me! Spank me, Mummy!”

And finally it was over. Nelnēae brought the wench’s bottom back to a consistent shiny, apple red color, but she restrained herself from using her full strength, and left no fresh bruises this time. In the end, she let the wench cradle her head on her shoulder and cry the remainder of her tears. To her own surprise Nelnēae found herself patting the wench on her back, and stroking her hair. “There, there, you silly thing. Spanking’s all done. It’s all over…now, what do you say?”

The wench fought to speak, between her racking sobs. “...Thank…thank you for sp-spanking me, mama. P-please…forgive me!”

Nelnēae let the moment hang. She had vowed to never forgive her mother for what she did. But Nelnēae understood that this poor, pitiable spanking wench was not her mother. The matriarch of the Megwandir clan had died, the day she had decided to become the spanking wench.
“I forgive you, dear. You’re mommy’s little girl.”

The audience cooed with sympathy, especially Willendorf, who nestled her head on Lothario's shoulder. "Isn't it simply wonderful? Makes me want to be a mother!"

Lothario was too preoccupied with thoughts of spanking Willendorf to comment.

Even Kornblume's parents decided to allow her to witness this touching scene of repentance and reconciliation. "Man, I missed all the good stuff."

Sister Kolhändler sniffed, approvingly. "Well, she did a fine job putting the wench in her place. Pity she's not a halfling."

Lady Mother Bridget held up her hands for silence. "Wonderful! This is the most touching display of penitence I've seen in all my years serving the Lady. Nelnēae, thank you. You've reminded us all what love and forgiveness truly is. The Lady of Love is honored by your offering. Of course, you're not a halfling, and therefore not subject to the domain of the Lady, but I know she is well pleased with you!"

Nelnēae held up her hand. "Lady Mother, may I ask a favor? Would it be possible for my mo–for the wench to stay with me? You know, when she's not on duty?"

Wilkes had never heard a crowd collectively gasp before. It was strange, because it seemed to swallow all the ambient laughter in the room.

Bridget scratched her chin. "Well, ordinarily, only the most pious of saints could afford–I mean, would have urgent need of a temple wench, outside of the temple's normal hours. But, for such a splendid display of how to handle a temple wench, I think you've earned the right to spend some 'quality time' together."

Bridget winked at the wench, who was still cradled in her daughter's arms like a baby. "And you are family, after all. Which reminds me, I think it's past time that we gave our wench a little nickname…Good folk, I propose we call her, 'Our Little Mama's Girl.' What say the Lady's children?"

A rousing cry of "Here, here!" greeted this suggestion.

Kornblume giggled. "Tee hee! It's 'cuz the wench still gets spankings from her mommy, and at her age!"

The wench blushed, and bowed her head. She remembered how her bold claim that she was destined to become the most famous spanking since the Red Mistress had been played on every halfling station to advertise the reality TV show. In the years since, she had languished in obscurity in this backwoods temple, without so much as a demeaning nickname to act as a title.

Bridget put the tip of her staff under the wench's chin to lift her eyes up from the floor. "Wench, stand up and face me. There's one more minor matter we still have to discuss."

The wench complied, then had a moment of dawning comprehension as she remembered she was stark naked. She quickly covered her front, before Nelnēae clapped her firmly across the rump, and reminded her to keep her hands behind her head. The wench obeyed, her bare breasts and her triangular, silvery white bush now on full frontal display for the assembly, which inspired fresh roars of laughter.

Lady Mother Bridget slammed her staff to call for silence. "I'm afraid we must address the matter of your expressed desire to forsake your vows of obedience and submission to the Lady. So, you demand to see the High Priestess, do you?"

The wench shook her head. "No, Lady Mother! I…I didn't mean it. I'm sorry I lost my temper."

Bridget shook her head mockingly, to match the wench. "Ah, ah, ah! I'm afraid it's too late for that. This is now a matter of church discipline. I'll have to spend at least a week here, and take your confession. If you are serious about wanting to leave, then I must do everything in my power, to…*persuade* you otherwise."

The wench gulped. "That isn't necessary! I want to be a good spanking wench more than anything, really I do!"

"Then you have nothing to fear from an inquisition. Once I've taken your confession, we can…*discuss* your penance and absolution. Really, it's my own fault for not giving you more attention. We've been far too lapse in keeping our Little Mama's Girl's not-so-little bottom the proper shade of red at all times. I'll write to my other parishes to explain the situation."

The wench stiffened, terrified, and enraptured at the thought of how her caboose was doomed to stay a constant, consistent crimson color in the near future. After feeling an encouraging love tap from her daughter, the Wench bowed respectfully. "Thank you, Lady Mother. I will submit to your guidance."

Bridget beamed. "In that case, why not start by doing your duty for the remainder of our congregation? Who here wishes to take a turn spanking our Little Mama's Girl, and petition the Goddess?"

When every hand in the room shot up, the wench glanced back nervously at her red bottom, which prompted a few giggles.

Noticing the wench's discomfort, Bridget spun their Little Mama's Girl around to display the wonderful results of the congregations' appeals to the Goddess for the day, so far. "My, my. This poor wench's goose looks thoroughly cooked. We may need an alternative to the traditional spanking. Any suggestions?"

The wench audibly gulped, her mind racing to find an out. It was never a good omen when the halflings decided to get creative. “Don’t you want to just heal my bottom? We can start again from–”

Bridget clapped the wench’s butt, almost playfully. “Don’t be absurd! Healing magic is only for emergencies…And don’t interrupt!”

Nelnēae clapped her hands, smiling wickedly. “We could cane her thighs, front and back! She used to do that to me!”

“Or her stomach! Give it a good slap with an open palm, and it’ll smart for days,” blurted out John Wilkes. His drone spun to focus the camera on his face.

Nelnēae glided over to pull him from the corner, pinching his arm. “That’s a deliciously sadistic suggestion. Are you sure you haven’t visited a halfling temple before, Mister Blogger?”

Wilkes’ face turned as red as the wench’s backside. “Oh, just an old hazing regimen from seminary school. We used to call it ‘pink belly’!”

Old Sister Kolhändler stabbed at the air with her umbrella. “Flogging her back would be more traditional. Just use the soft deer-skin martinet, and you can cause plenty of discomfort, without risk of serious injury.”

Little Kornblume bounced up and down on her father’s shoulder. “Ooh! Rap her knuckles with a ruler…and then her palms! The school librarian did that to me, once!”

Lothario leered at the wench, with a face that looked like he was about to sprout devil horns. “Or we could spread her legs and lash her–”

Kornblume’s mother clapped her hands across Kornblume’s ears. “Please! There are children present!”

“The tits! Spank her big, bouncy boobies!” cheered Willendorf, playing with her own breasts to illustrate.

The cheers that erupted made the winner clear: “Spank her tits!”

Bridget pronounced her judgment. “Very good! A fitting way to illustrate how the Lady welcomes us to her…bosom. Of course, we can still give our wench ‘the hot seat’ with no risk of injury. Mr. Sandiman, if you would do the honors! You know, Nelnēae, it was quite inspired to have the wench face the congregation, so she could see all the eyes on her. We usually like watching her bottom bouncing about, but we’ll have to work your idea into our regular routine.”

At a gesture from the priestess, Mr. Sandiman threw on his work gloves, and produced the custom-built, wedge shaped “seat,” stuffing fresh stinging nettles into the net to serve as a cushion, and made a point of angling it so the wench would face the congregation. Now her delightful facial expressions of agony, and her naked chest, would both be in view.

The wench’s buttocks clenched as she saw the “hot seat” before her. “Oh, really, I think my bottom could handle a bit more spanking. Why not–”

The nylon ropes flew back into place across her wrists and ankles, binding her once again, though this time, the ropes yanked her wrists behind her back and pulled them up tight against the small of her back, so that the wench’s DD-cup-sized boobs were thrust forward, with no DD-sized bra to obstruct their magnificence.

Sandiman interrupted the wench’s stalling tactics by pressing her shoulder down, forcing her to rest her weight, fully, on the stinging nettles. The wench gasped as she felt them dig into her groin and ass, and the tickling sensation slowly began to build to an angry burning. There is a reason stinging nettles have been dubbed “the silent spanking.”

Lady Mother Bridget Füdlewhopper reverently retrieved the birch bundle from the plaster statue of the Lady, undid the ribbon that bound the bundle, and held aloft a single birch switch.

No sooner had the wench had time to process that her buttocks were burning, then she felt the first stroke of the switch across her bare breasts and Bridget demonstrated the proper technique, aiming blows expertly across the wench’s underboobs, then her cleavage, before landing the third stroke across both the wench’s perky nipples. The pain shot through her body like an electric shock, her elbows and knees tingling from the sensation of having thousands of needles pressed into her from every direction. Immediately, her nipples began to swell, throbbing and puffy.

As the wench threw back her head and sang a clear note of anguish, she had an ecstatic vision. She saw herself, being safely led to the lap of the Lady of Lashes, by her own daughter, before being bent over and spanked forever and ever. Drooling, the wench offered up a private prayer of thanks, asking for the courage she needed to persevere. As the pain reached its climax, the pain itself lost its sting, and became pleasure. There would be times the wench would fall again into the depths of despair and doubt. But at that moment, she thanked her Goddess from the bottom of her heart for creating her to be a spanking wench.

She knew she belonged to the halflings, as their property. That she was nothing more than their very own, Mama’s Little Girl. And at that moment, there was nothing more in all the world she wanted to be.

…

John Wilkes sat before his laptop, typing, muttering, deleting, and retyping his closing thoughts, over and over again.

“Note from John Wilkes: After the explosive response and positive feedback I’ve received for my initial research into provincial halfling ceremonial practices, I’m pleased to announce that Lady Mother Bridget Füdlewhopper has generously agreed to permit more recorded sessions of their religious services, in the hopes that it will encourage the next generation to appreciate the value of religion, and to honor the Lady of Love, the Lady of Laughter, and the Lady of Lashes. We are both thankful, and indebted to the First Temple of the Halfling Quarter, Metropolitan District #1324. As ever, *John Wilkes’ “Booth”: The Blog For Religious Revival*, is honored to be on the frontlines of religious anthropology, and defending wholesome, traditional family values.”

In the corner of his screen, he had his video editing software open to the point where he had spanked the wench himself, and was arguing whether the general public needed to see the unedited footage. Remembering his strict upbringing in the Temple of Chastity, Wilkes tapped a key to cut the damning clip. Then his fingers faltered, and he tapped undo, restoring it.

“Of course, as a Cleric of the Temple of Chastity, I do not endorse the…suggestive nature of the rituals depicted in this footage. Furthermore, the official catechism of the Church makes clear that all forms of slavery, even legal, voluntary slavery, are not endorsed by the Lord of Justice and Purity, although Church doctrine also makes allowance for the needs of other cultures and faiths which institute such practices. I am assured by the representatives of the Halfling Temple that all wenches must voluntarily submit to their condition of…indentured servitude.”

Rubbing his bleary eyes, Wilkes decided he ought to say something scholarly. After all, that was what his eager readers expected. But he also had so many other thoughts to share. “My investigation is primarily focused on the halfling temple’s practices for anthropological purposes. Nevertheless, I cannot help but reflect on the incredible nature of these practices, having now participated, personally…”

By now, the footage on his editing software had progressed to the scene when he’d given the wench her second spanking.

“The nameless….wench, now granted the informal title of ‘Little Mama’s Girl’ possessed a forceful and spirited personality. I suppose only a very determined person could endure such a life, and by her own choosing. But I must admit, however harsh her treatment must seem, I found myself thinking she deserved it. Yet the halflings themselves appear to be utterly unconcerned with matters of sin and punishment. By far, the element of deliberate humor and community storytelling in the halfling religious service was most surprising to me…”

He reflected on Kornblume and Sister Kolhändler’s contrasting approaches, fast forwarding past their moments in the recording to refresh his memory.

“Young and old, halflings continue to participate in their religious life…enthusiastically. Whatever our religious disagreements with one another, I must admit their commitment to encouraging youth engagement is worthy of…imitation?”

John Wilkes deleted the word “imitation” and replaced it with “consideration.” No sense committing himself publicly to a position just yet, not when he was already nervous about the Temple of Chastity’s High Inquisitor reading his blog.

Then Wilkes reflected on the love poetry of Lothario Lovefoot, and the battle between Willendorf and the three bratty halfling women. He wondered if Lothario had confessed his love to Willendorf, and was now happily spanking the love of his life. “Possible, but not likely,” muttered Wilkes.

Then he wondered if the three spoiled, rotten halfling women were, even now, attending “Spanking Bootcamp,” to be trained for their new lives as wonderly chaste and terribly chastened young ladies. “Probable…almost definitely!” Wilkes smiled and began to type.

“The sheer variation of the prayers is in need of further study. Halfling Spanking Poetry has long been noted for its clever turn-of-phrase and…unashamed use of innuendo by secular scholars [Note: find a citation for this point later]. Yet my findings also reveal that halfling parents are not afraid to employ more traditional forms of corporal punishment in domestic settings, though perhaps only in extreme circumstances. The stereotype that halflings never spank their children, but always spank elf maids, may have begun with a grain of truth, but it is clearly a myth. Rather, we learned that halflings sharply distinguish the matter of corporal punishment, as a tool for child rearing, from their practice of flogging spanking wenches, treating the former as a serious matter, and the latter as…a joke.”

Finally, Wilkes skipped to the end, to find the footage of Nelnēae furiously beating her own mother. At the memory of how the young drow had teased him throughout the service, Wilkes found himself wishing that she might volunteer for service as a spanking wench herself, by her own free will of course. “I’d like to see her on the other end of a spanking…”

Wilkes choked at this thought, and immediately intoned a prayer of repentance for lustful thoughts. Satisfied, he considered the subsequent scene, when Nelnēae embraced her mother, the former matriarch of the Megwandir Clan, forgave her, and accidentally gave the wench her new title of “honor.”

“Given the reputation this blog has earned in conservative theological circles, I am certain that this research will prompt…debate amongst my followers. That is a debate worth having. But let me also say that, no matter my personal reservations, I am deeply thankful to Lady Nelnēae for reminding me of the importance of forgiveness and reconciliation.”

Wilkes shook his head as he looked at the hours of unedited footage he still had, and decided editing the first half of the morning service would be more than enough for a day’s work. His

more scholarly examination of the halfling temple practice was already done. All that was left…was the raw footage. Wilkes hand hovered over the mouse, hesitating before clicking “Publish.”

Just the news that John Wilkes intended to interview the obscure halfling cult had already sent waves across the conservative High Church blogosphere. What if the High Inquisitor brought this blog to the attention of the High Pontif of the Temple of Chastity and Justice himself?

John swallowed as he rewatched the footage of himself enthusiastically spanking the temple wench, for the thousandth time. “Fuck it.”

John Wilkes clicked “Publish,” and closed his laptop. It was time for a rest.

[The End]